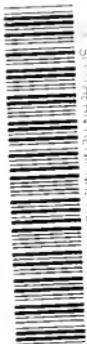


# EASTERN SONGS

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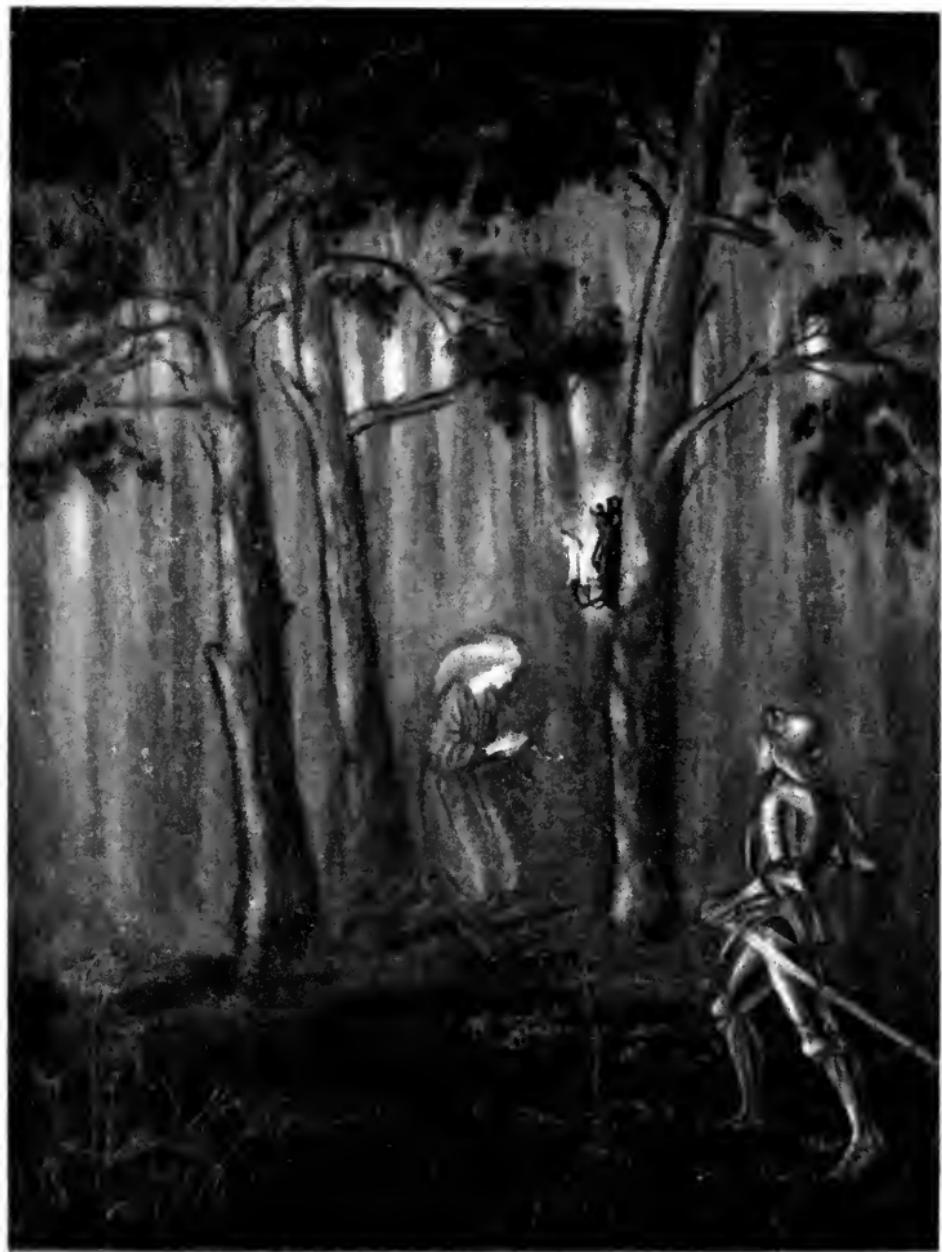


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# EASTERN SONGS







TANCRED AND BIANDRADA.

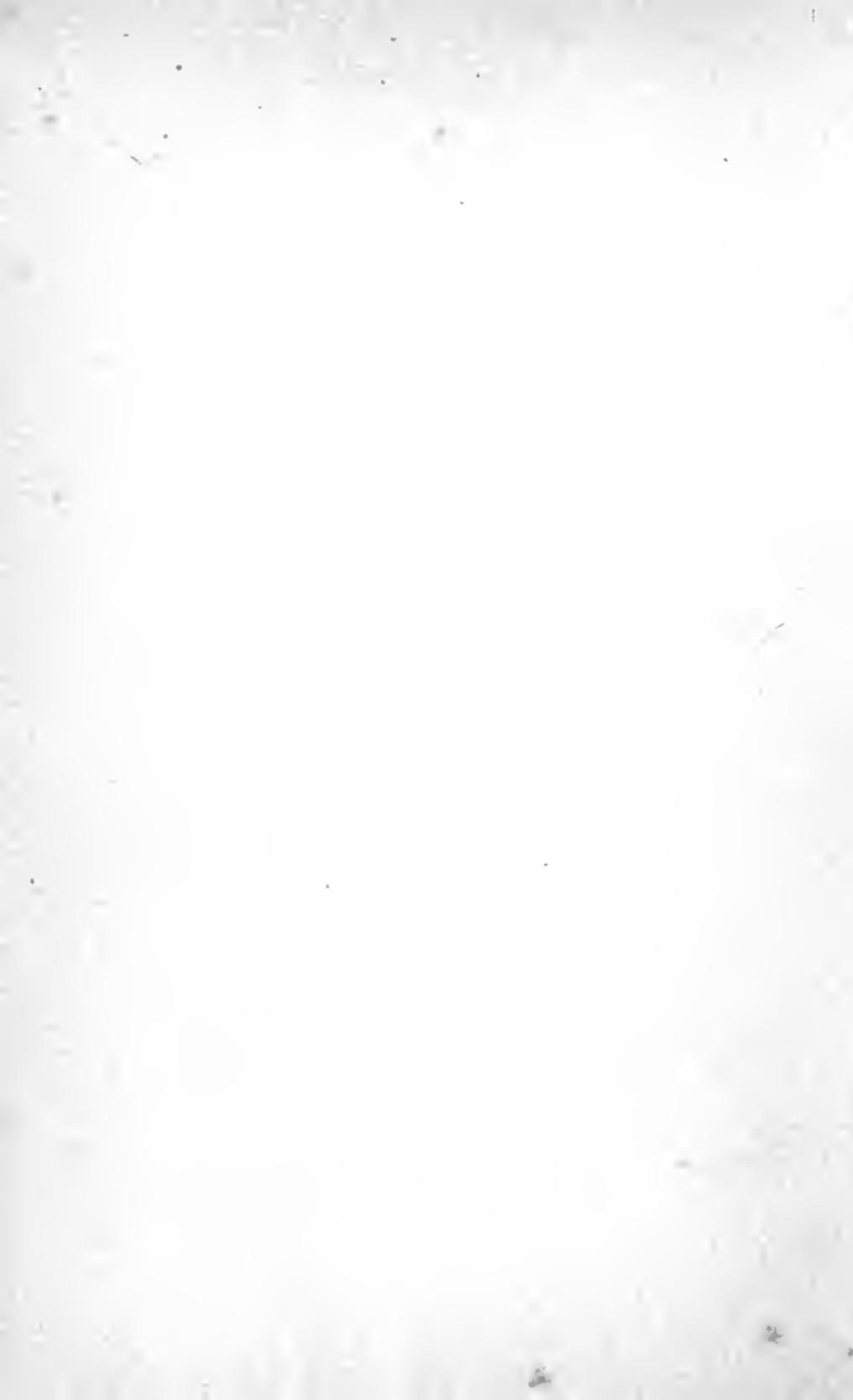
# EASTERN SONGS

BY

BEN KENDIM

William Blackwood & Sons  
Edinburgh and London

1911



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*TO*

*MY MOTHER*

**861890**



I HAVE to thank the Editors of the  
'Spectator,' the 'Cornhill Magazine,'  
and the 'Westminster Gazette,' for  
their kind permission to reprint verses  
which they have published from time  
to time.



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# P O E M S.

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## A BALLAD OF TANCRED AND BIANDRADA.

To E.

THE wind was half asleep among the pine,  
The moon rose trembling in a faint, red flame,  
A drowsy fragrance filled the mountain vine,  
When down the mountain Tancred came.

He strode through shadowy woods ; gay in the  
strength  
Of life, he sought the violence of the sea,  
And through the shadows his sword's naked length  
Answered the moonlight's purity.

A

He felt a furious lust of mastery,  
An eagerness to fight the foam and tide,  
To strike the slumber from the sea, or die  
In the possession of his bride.

. . . . .

She stole like holy incense from the wood,  
To bring calm worship to the Virgin's shrine,  
Intent on prayer, forgetful if she stood  
Or knelt, to Mary of the Pine.

The tender stars were tangled in her hair,  
The dewdrops fought for light about her feet,  
She was so beautiful a man would swear  
God's Mother walked to make night sweet.

She came a Queen, unconscious, unaware  
Of all her wealth and weight of sovereignty,  
Her kingdom but an innocence so rare  
That all men paid it fealty.

She prayed for dead folks that she never knew,  
Her prayers were like white arrows archers loose,  
A flash of light ascending through the blue,  
In the deep stillness of God's Truce.

The silver of the moonlight grew more dim,  
His ears were deaf to the sea's wistful call,—  
To watch one red leaf was enough for him,  
A leaf her hair caught in its fall.

A child she knelt, where light and shadows wed,  
He watched the reverence of her attitude,  
The adoration of her bended head,  
That was so fair against the wood.

She said, "Give men the peace my spirit shows,"  
(Through moonlit peace her thoughts went up  
to God ;)  
She prayed, "Give me the peace that no man knows,  
Your thought when first You made the rose,  
Your miracle before repose,"—  
Then to her side Prince Tancred trod.

Prince Tancred spoke, "Will you teach me to pray,  
Interpret what I cannot understand,  
God, answered by each woodland way,  
The praise of His by sea and land ?"  
And "Yes," she said, and took his hand.

She gave him seven kisses, kisses sweet,  
    But only one, the first, in Mary's name.  
She bowed her head. The dew that touched his  
    feet  
    Flashed in her hair in points of flame.

. . . . .

Once more she sought the Virgin of the Pine,  
    But where before she knelt, Biandrada lay.  
She wept, "O where I lost it by your shrine,  
    Give back to me my power to pray."

## TWO WAYS.

GOOD-BYE, my friend, our ways part here,  
The dawn grows white, for us to start ;  
We've travelled far, and without fear,  
We never thought our ways would part.

The highroad was not made for me,  
I want the woods where dawn lies wet.  
Your goal lies onward, where you see ;  
The forest hills hide mine as yet.

You thought my way would still be yours,  
Straight as an arrow in its track ?  
Good-bye again ; don't wait or pause ;  
It's I who turn aside—or back.

Your steps ring on the causeway clear,  
All men may see the road you pass.  
You will not see my way, nor hear  
My steps among the secret grass.

## THE INSURGENTS' SONG.

YE who preach to us patience, how deep do ye  
deem our wrong?

O rulers of Christian nations, have ye waited in  
patience long?

Have ye prayed on the open hill, out under the  
naked sky,

“God grant that the Kurd may kill, that our women  
at home may die”?

Have ye mocked at the Sacred Name, for the sake  
of another’s life,

Nor flinched at the filthy shame, that sears like a  
red-hot knife?

Have ye known what was past despair, as ye stooped  
to a dying wife,

O ye who have said, “Forbear; have done with your  
wanton strife”?

We have watched how an old priest dies, from the sickness that men call fear,  
Blank dread in his tortured eyes, we have heard what we would not hear ;  
We have listened to children's cries ; seen when we would be blind  
Maids treated in shameful wise. We have waited, we know our mind.

Have ye fled in the sickly dawn, before it was yet too late,  
With a child on your arm, new-born, leaving cripples to find their fate ?  
Our altars were foul with mud, when we came to the homes we fled,  
Smelt the reek of our kinsmen's blood, thanked God that the dead were dead.

By the fires of our own homes, red, we have lifted our hands to God,  
We have sworn that we would not tread the way that our fathers trod,

We have sworn to the gentle Christ for vengeance  
alone to live,  
For the sum of their guilt sufficed. Let God, if He  
can, forgive.

O Lords who are strong and wise, shall we take what  
our masters give?

Better die as a wild beast dies than live as the cattle  
live.

Is there one of your words unbroken, your promise  
of pleasant things?

Our innocent dead are token of the worth of the  
words of kings.

Ye are girdled with safety, Preachers, ye know that  
your lives are sure,

Ye would give us your wisdom, Teachers, and bid us  
“Endure, endure,”

Ye never have hated night for the sake of those that  
are dear,

Ye say, “Ye are mad with fright” by God, we have  
met with fear.

Now listen to us, O Lords, to your "brethren" about to die,

Have done with your oaths and words, or be damned with your own damned lie,

For surely as Christ was slain, and surely as Christ arose,

We have called on you, called in vain. Now we fight to that end God knows.

## B I S M A R C K.

## In Memoriam.

(Cf. BUSCH.)

To R. A.

You planned a splendid Empire, fit to greet  
As sister, the fair Monarchies that shone of old.  
The kings who crouched, you scorned beneath your  
feet,

To you men's cry for mercy was an idle bleat,—  
You forged your Empire, shod with steel and  
crowned in gold.

To you the misery of sword and flame,  
The supplication of the women whose sons die,  
Was half a jest. You made your iron name,  
And gave your Empire life through roots of  
treachery.

France felt the venom of your bitter hate,  
You struck the mem'ry that was Austria to the mud,  
And gallant Denmark groaned beneath your rod,  
While in your heart you bade the English wait  
To pay their toll of gold and agony of blood.

You planned superbly, like an architect  
Who dedicates his soul to stone, to the stone's hurt.  
You smirched your work, and left your Empire  
wreck't,  
Beneath the legacy of all your load of dirt.

By your vitality you fired a force,  
Whose cunning conquered kings in devious subtle  
ways,  
You made a trick of marriage and divorce,  
And when you touched them even lovely things grew  
coarse,  
Beneath the tyranny of your coarse phrase.

Years shall record your gift of cruel patience,  
Blood, constant, drop by drop, anointed your grim  
throne.  
Your name stinks in the nostrils of the nations,  
Your work stands sick with infamy, and stands alone.

You made your violent Empire, haughty, strong,  
And in its way you trampled corn and wasted fruit,  
Invoked great God to witness your worst wrong,  
And gave your creature music, in the piteous song  
That rose from conquered streets beneath the  
Prussian boot.

Yours was the glory never to relent,  
Till guiltless, humbled countries gratified your  
mood,  
The curses of the conquered made your life content,  
In death receive your wreath of “Teuton” gratitude.

Pray then that you be utterly forgot,  
You and your triumphs, mean bargains of your  
trade,  
Friendship a feint, your sacrament a plot,  
Your lies the twins of oaths, your kiss before your  
shot,  
Creator of the people you betrayed.

## THE IMPENITENT.

To M. H.

I WENT a pilgrim to a shrine,  
But at the shrine I could not pray,  
For, Heaven help me, on the way  
I revelled in a foreign wine.

I trod a noonday path through trees,  
Where leaves were cool and shadows deep  
And calm as twilight on dim seas,  
That fills the heart and soul with sleep.

I passed an inn, blue waves below,  
Blue sky, a mountain's height above,  
And there I saw the wine I love—  
Red wine that the Italians grow.

Now much as I desire to pray  
At that saint's grave where candles shine,  
If once again I pass that way,  
I'll revel in the foreign wine.

## BALLAD OF KING HENRY.

To K. A.

DEAD is King Henry, dead of his pain,  
Dead in his marble palace at Liege ;  
He has fought with the Saxon, fought with the Dane,  
Striven with France and conquered Lorraine,  
Great in the battle, stiff in the siege,  
But a mist from the hills stole out one night,  
And darkened his eyes of their windy light.

Dead is King Henry, dead of his grief,  
Tired was the Emperor, spent was the Conqueror,  
Enemies had he, passing belief,  
Son of his body, Duke of his fief,  
Only the poor man, he was his follower,  
Worshipped his Kaiser, died for his chief.

They have borne him away, his few cavaliers,  
From Liege on to Aix, from Aix to Cologne,  
His litter the shafts of sycamore spears,  
A pine for his coffin, and poor men his peers,  
Who followed the wind to conquer a throne,  
But stars are the candles that burn round his head,  
And the river he fought for shall make him a bed.

The Pope he would send his spirit to Hell,  
And cast forth his body on to the wold,  
But his warriors loved him, they loved him well,  
They marched with him singing, from Rhine to  
Moselle,  
The poor folk followed, too many to tell,  
They have covered his bier with red marigold,  
And the Bishop of Liege has rung him a knell.

The Lord Pope sleeps in porphyry,  
Wrapped in a golden sheet,  
But the splendid soul of King Henry  
Sits at Our Lady's feet.

## G A L A H A D.

## A NEW VERSION.

HER hair was brown, but dusted gold  
Shone on it, by a young wind blown ;  
It lived in light and seemed to hold  
The sun or starshine for its own.

Her eyes were like Our Lady's, grey,  
They ransomed light for other light,  
They were a day-dream of the day,  
The echo of a perfect night.

The beauty of her face compelled  
All thought, all reason, everything,  
Yet half withdrew and just withheld  
The crown of its imagining.

Her step was like a soft leaf's fall  
That wakes the sleeper in a wood.  
It came, and when it went then all  
Had gone from life that seemed most good.

One instant, for a moment's space,  
She stood before him where he prayed ;  
He felt her eyes, he felt her face,  
The wind that touched her in the glade.

He left his prayer, forgot the place,  
Forgot his vision of the Grail,  
He saw her eyes, her hair, her face—  
His hilt-cross struck the altar rail.

The music ceased like daylight spent—  
He never cast one glance behind,  
But followed on the way she went—  
A hidden way, and hard to find.

## K O R E A.

## To CYNTHIA.

BETWEEN two seas there lies a land I know,  
A land of sand, high-breasted hills most dear  
To listless winds and streams that hardly flow  
So burdened with dead leaves for half the year,  
A land of sand, too desolate for fear.

It is a place of grief, beyond belief,  
With miseries too manifold to mourn.  
Soft-feathered winds of spring bring no relief,  
And summer gives no golden crown to corn,  
A stricken place, whose face God keeps forlorn.

From winter till the autumn's creeping gold  
Has flushed the forests, Memory is made  
The King of all, a great Lord, sullen-souled,  
He holds the mountain and the plain afraid,  
A monstrous King whose kingdom has decayed.

There day gives way to day, as dream to dreams,  
And men are intimate with death as sleep ;  
White - robed they pray dead gods beside dead  
streams,  
By stagnant streams that wander to the deep ;  
And still, by plain and hill half-shadows creep.

## THE HOLY HALF-WIT—THE SCHOLAR.

(DUOLOGUE.)

To E. C.

WHICH is the way you travel, and do you travel far,  
And is the light you follow the daylight or a star ?  
Oh, do you rise at morning, and when the sun sets,  
red,  
Find rest in a green valley, and moss to make your  
bed ?

I do not follow sun or star, nor any lights that wane,  
My spirit knows her minister. I feel nor drought  
nor rain.

To tirèd feet no way is sweet ; I journey past desire,  
It is my goal to cleanse my soul in her white-kindled  
fire.

But on your weary marches have you no trusted friend,

A comrade in the desert, to cheer you and defend,  
With songs as clear as water, and a sword that's keen and gay,

Against the scorching sands, or the tribes that bar the way?

I travel east and travel west, and like a child at play,  
I play with leaves when I take rest to wait what God shall say.

There are no tribes to bid me halt; my spirit leaves behind

Dead weeds of passion that my fault has sown when I was blind.

You wander past dim gardens, where lovely wild flowers grow,

Where night that shuts the lilies comes with the fireflies' glow;

At dusk you pass by maidens with wreaths upon their hair,

To seek a shadowy Majesty who heeds no shadow prayer.

The budding leaves, the leaves that fade, dead leaves  
the wind blows by,

By Him commanded, sun and shade, are God and  
He is I.

For east or west the way I trod is south and north  
the same—

The end and the beginning God, and God is not a  
name.

There's pain in the beginning, our mother's pain at  
birth ;

There's pain in losing, winning, till earth goes back  
to earth.

Inshallah in the morning, when the dew is on the  
grass,

We'll drink our wine together, let clouds and wisdom  
pass.

I'll drink of wine with you, my friend, though  
friendlier is my rill,

That rises at the rainbow's end, beside the daffodil.

I have no rule but the one thought that leads me on  
the way,

The lesson that my soul was taught she ponders  
night and day.

You tire your head with thinking where poplar  
breezes blow,<sup>1</sup>

Then let your thoughts like wild doves roost at the  
afterglow.

You have not prayed at Meccah, do you keep  
Ramadan?

Old man, you crave a saintship, your saintship's not  
begun.

Yes, thou art right, for I delayed and squandered  
what I had,

And though at many shrines I prayed my soul was  
never glad.

But now the whole world is my shrine, I never ask  
Him "why,"<sup>2</sup>

The beetle in the dust His sign, His sign the rain-  
bow sky.

The meaning of the promise that you bestow on men  
Is this, "Forego your pleasure, for God shall give  
again,"

<sup>1</sup> *Kavak yelleri*, the poplar breezes blow in his head,—a Turkish synonym for madness or restlessness.

<sup>2</sup> *Bichun*. He of whom no reasons are inquired. One of the names of God.

You rise above our weakness and count yourself a saint ;

I pray the wind of Heaven, blow sweet with this world's taint.

A child that passed fell on the way. He said, "Wait but a while,"

When comfort made the child as gay, he left him with a smile,

The man had gone. He mused, "Words have but little use. They fail.

Between the path I trod and tread, a loaf of bread,  
Between the living and the dead, God knows, so frail a veil,"

And took his staff, for he was lame.

## THE CRUSADER.

YOUR face holds that which men might seek,  
As great knights sought the Holy Grail,  
With thoughts more pure than man may speak,  
In deeds as splendid where men fail.

Your voice is like the sound of things  
That every hillman knows and loves,  
The wind on harps of many strings,  
The pine-trees answer to the doves.

The revelation that you are  
Is this and more than this to me,  
The harbour lights, however far,  
That lost men cry to on the sea.

## DAMASCUS GATE.

To V.

SHE went to bargain in the city,  
And passed a beggar by her gate,  
And he was wretched, so from pity  
She gave, because his need was great.

And this was like her, that she gave  
In charity without a thought  
A coin of gold, for “gold can save,”  
(She said) “what gold has never bought.”

The beggar followed where she went,  
Forgot his hunger for a star,  
And when at last, her money spent,  
She could not buy in the bazaar,

He said, “Take back your gift, I pray,  
Do me this honour, once my due.”  
She bought with it red silk, and grey,  
And that was very like her, too.

## SARDINIAN SONG.

To ALATHEA.

TAKE my hand, and come with me,  
And we will unlock the gate,  
To the way of porphyry,  
And the woods of pomegranate.  
Take the key at break of day  
(Hushed the dawn and cool the grass),  
Calm anemones the way,  
And your eyes as calm as they,  
White the way white feet shall pass.

You will give me keys to Heaven,  
Rest in groves of pomegranate?  
It's a weary way to Heaven,  
And the doors are shut to hate.  
There's a path that threads the pine,  
Till it's faint, and spent, and lost ;  
There's a sorrow that is mine,  
By a Cross among the pine,  
And it's I must pay its cost.

White anemonies are still,  
When the friendly fern-winds cease,  
But I know a hidden hill  
Standing in a deeper peace.  
Once you knew that hill at least,  
Cara mia Maddelena,  
Tell your burden to the priest,  
At confession turn you east,  
Scorda tu la tua pena.

I have wanted, wanted rest,  
But there comes the call I hear,  
And I must fulfil my quest,  
Oh, its end is very near.  
For the way that I must tread  
Ends among the whispering trees,  
Where low litanies are said,  
By the dying leaves and dead,  
And no birds sing overhead,  
Nor are there anemonies.

## THE GRAND VIZIER.

To C. F. M.

AND I will be a Queen, said she, and you my Grand  
Vizier,

And Uncle George shall rule my house, and John be  
charioteer.

And he picked cowslips in the field, which she gave  
back to him,

And they enjoyed the summer day until the day  
grew dim.

And later as the years went by, she did become a  
Queen,

But Uncle George said, "Thank you, no"; John's  
grave had long been green.

The boy worked well as Grand Vizier, but not with  
all his heart,

He thought "To pick her cowslips would be a  
better part."

## THE ALBANIAN IN THE YEMEN.

TO KIAZIM BEY.

Is there rest beneath a palm-tree and contentment  
in its shade,  
In the splendour of the desert, where high resolves  
are made?  
Level tracks of yellow marches where the sunrise  
bids us start,  
On to warfare in the morning, when a man must  
play his part.

Camels know their place for kneeling, and the pigeon  
knows her tree,  
But the Yemen sands are burning, and the desert  
winds hate me;  
I shall have no rest from marching till the coolness  
of the shade  
Of the cypresses of Prisrend, when my debt of hate  
is paid.

There are vultures in the Yemen, not the eagles of  
my land,

There are red flowers in the Yemen, but at home  
wild Lady's hand<sup>1</sup>

Grows around my house at Prisrend where each year  
the same storks nest;

Oh to hear their wings a-clapping, when my friends  
and I take rest!

Shall I come again at evening, to the valley of our  
Drin,

See the afterglow through twilight where as white  
as a girl's skin

Snow is shining on the mountains, and above the  
snow a star,

Inshallah in the evening, but takdir tedbiri bozar?<sup>2</sup>

I would give the rest of life before I reach the Calm  
Abode<sup>3</sup>

But to see the mountain faces that the racing fire-  
light showed,

<sup>1</sup> Lady's hand, Turkish name for honeysuckle.

<sup>2</sup> *Takdir tedbiri bozar*, God's decree breaks man's intention.

<sup>3</sup> *Ikhtihali-dar-i-baka*, the Abode of Permanence.

And with friends to sit and finger the old pedlar's  
wares, Ferhan,  
Hear them call at dawn, and linger by the crimson  
erghawan.<sup>1</sup>

There behind the harem windows, lattice windows  
that look blind,  
Just beyond the swaying cypresses, I know what I  
shall find,  
Pertev endaz, nuri ainem, she whose voice is attar  
sweet,<sup>2</sup>  
And whose love is to my spirit as the rain is to the  
wheat.

If I find my foe from Debra, and I never see her  
face,  
I have many friends in Prisrend, there'll be stones  
to mark the place<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Erghawan*, Judas trees.

<sup>2</sup> *Pertev endaz*, &c., casting rays, darling of my soul.

<sup>3</sup> When a man is killed because of *jak* (blood), in Albania,  
they mark the place with white stones.

So my spirit shall find quiet, with my head below  
white stones,

When the melting snow has roused the Drin till all  
his water drones.

The white Drin and the black Drin, fierce brethren  
of a feud,

They storm the savage winter, a gallant mountain  
brood;

But the challenge of their turmoil will be music dear  
to me,

Who hate the tide of crawling sand and the sand-red  
sea.

## THE BOOK-LOVER.

You only love a light that's far,  
You fix your eyes upon a star  
And will not look where glowworms are,  
Nor lamps that light men down the street.

You have, you think, a perfect creed,  
Your gospel heals no wounds that bleed,  
You look too high to care or heed  
Whether you trample rose or weed  
Beneath inexorable feet.

On earth you miss the best of all,  
You do not hear the wild birds call,  
Nor music of the waterfall,  
And winds that are more musical  
Than David's harp that soothed King Saul.

There is no Heaven where you fare,  
Nor where you seek Him is God there,  
But emptiness that is despair.

You pass your hope by in a dream,  
And barter truth for things that seem ;  
My paradise of wood and stream  
Is nearer Heaven than you deem.

## THE MOUNTAINEER.

I PAY my court in the open day,  
A song and a laugh and a shining blade.  
The hermit who hears me forgets to pray,  
The sunburnt peasant throws down his spade,  
The merchant of spices grows tired of trade,  
When I am in love in the noon of May.

The envious anchorite marks my way,  
The shepherd forgets that his sheep have strayed  
Through the green of the vines to the olive's grey,  
The trader curses his sordid trade,  
Amber and rubies, Chinese jade—  
“ Better, far better his lot,” they say.

If love be in vain, I will take my sword,  
No part of my joy will I leave behind,  
But swimming the rivers I cannot ford,  
I shall come to the hills that are always kind,  
My hills I would seek, though my eyes were blind,  
More dear to my feet than soft lawns abroad.

If love is not mine, there is this for me,  
A cliff full of shadows where beech leaves fall,  
The song of the wind on a sunlit sea,  
The sound of the waves that are free, free, free,  
While the evening star lights my festival.

## THE SAINT IN THE DESERT.

(A DUOLOGUE.)

Is there certainty of Heaven, an abode for when  
I die?

Man dare not be apostate beneath an evening sky;  
I stretch my hand towards it, yet I fear to touch  
the ark,

There is hope while twilight lingers, shall I find it  
after dark?

The fly that's caged in amber, be sure she has a soul,  
And nothing passes through the world, but pays  
the world a toll.

I know the way to freedom ; believe, distracted one,  
The fly shall leave the amber when her prison days  
are done.

Instruction is for morning, your philosophy is late,  
Though evening's kin to daybreak, there is night  
beyond the gate.

I have no time for lessons, and but little time to wait,  
For written on my forehead is the burden of my fate.

The stars that shine above you are but sisters in  
their light

To shadows of wild violet leaves that sheathe the  
fireflies' flight.

For light and shadow had one birth, and light  
shadow's twin;

The robe of our humanity, O seeker, know, is sin.

The mirages of mystics, they are a subtle wine,  
And food for that great holiness, which, desert saint,  
is thine.

But I want real water, before night covers me,  
No pledge of plenty by a far, intangible, pale sea.

As you may learn a language, forget it and recall,  
As blinded men remember the autumn leaves red fall,

Look back, my friend, remember. Did you travel  
once this way  
With Solomon, the ancient king, who knew what  
wild birds say?

I draw my sword on shadows, I know not where  
to thrust,  
In streams of clearest water, I taste the red grapes  
must;  
Your words of consolation are like the waves that  
sigh,  
A pleasant song for living men, no comfort when  
they die.

Before you reach that point in time your spirit thinks  
the end,  
Know death and resurrection two faces of a friend,  
Know each step indispensable towards the goal you  
march,  
The way you conquer, part of you, yourself the  
sands that parch.

Ah, give me help to free myself from all entangling thoughts,

O seneschal of keys that lead to cool and quiet courts;

My spirit burns her eagerness for rest I cannot reach,  
As spray that fails to touch the flowers sinks seaward  
on the beach.

## THE MONK.

To B. L.

DELIGHT has got so many ways, I found her once  
in wine,

In turbulent, hot-headed day, a-harvesting the vine ;  
A mountain flower, a scented weed, she grows in low  
and lofty places ;

I tasted all her bitter seed, and know how manifold  
her grace is.

Now I have fought on many fields and travelled  
many soils,

And seen that sometimes he who yields brings home  
the better spoils.

Since I have bid good-bye to pleasure, monastic calm  
shall now be mine,

And I will study at my leisure what joys there are,  
apart from wine.

## BY JEDDAH TOWN.

To L.

THERE were ten Arabs in the plain, who met him  
with his guide;

The sheikh of them rode forward then, to talk at  
eventide.

He said, "The desert is a place where rarely strangers  
thrive,

Give up your horse, give up your gun, and you'll go  
home alive."

He answered to the Arab sheikh, "Peace on you  
and your kin,

But I shall give my horse to-night to ostlers at the  
inn.

My race is not a humble folk whom such as you  
bid walk ;  
Have you no powder with your ten that one comes  
out to talk ? ”

And silence fell between the two. The Moslem  
pulled his rein,  
Then, “ Here’s the truth of El Hejaz, why should  
brave men be slain ? ”  
You have ten Beduw lances, four Beduw shots to  
fear ; ”  
But gaily laughed the Englishman, “ I have five  
bullets here.”

“ It’s full a league to Jeddah town, the evening will  
be done  
Before you reach the tomb of Eve and the Turkish  
garrison ;  
Resign yourself to Allah’s will, and see to-morrow’s  
sun,  
And go in peace, you cannot fight, for we are ten  
to one.”

They shot at him against the light, and twice they  
missed him wide,

When swiftly up behind him came Mahmoud, his  
desert guide.

He shot his guide, and still he had four bullets that  
he stored,

And when his horse fell, wounded, three. He would  
not use his sword.

They followed him as kites that mark a stag that  
soon must die;

Unfalteringly he held his way, his gallant head was  
high.

Eleven fighters crossed the sand, their shadows grew  
apace,

While ten of them were taught the truth about his  
English race.

They had but one shot still to fire. The world was  
very still,

And safety shone from Eve's white tomb, that shone  
a tiny hill.

Their last shot failed, and he went on content that  
he had won,  
And glad to see the glory of the blood-red setting  
sun.

The desert is a cruel place, where strangers rarely  
thrive.

He shot his horse, he shot his guide, but he walked  
home alive.

## SUCCESS AND FAILURE.

SOMEWHAT above, beyond the others,  
I strove to find a lordly place ;  
They would not be the less my brothers  
Because I conquered in the race.

I won myself a little crown,  
Called to my friends, "Come, sit with me,"  
But in the end myself went down,—  
With them threw pebbles in the sea.

## THE LAHZ.

HE helped me in the desert, for he carried half my  
load,

And, singing in a foreign tongue, he strove to cheer  
the road.

And though our converse was but short, I wished at  
the day's end

The scanty best the desert gives to him who'd been  
my friend.

And afterwards I passed the place, and found one,  
desolate,

Belaboured by a Syrian, whose blows told of his hate.  
I knew that Syrian captain, I knew and loathed him  
well,

And took his weapon as I said, "Go with your kin  
to Hell."

And he went down the winding road, amazed at  
God's decree,

And left the sick man whom he beat to talk awhile  
with me.

And it was he who cheered the way, when he had  
power to sing;

He had no power of singing now, nor strength for  
wayfaring.

## TURKISH PROVERBS.

Look not for help from friends in need,  
Nor vaunt the courage of your steed,  
Trust not the metal of his breed,  
For so you are undone indeed.

Trust in your wife if she should swear,  
As you would trust in streams to bear  
The rings of gold that honour her.

Put confidence in sheep that stray,  
In promises to bind a Bey,  
Or if you choose in the Last Day,  
And woe betide you when you pay.

## E POI—.

To M. V.

THE wind is lazy on the sea, the ripple sleeps below  
the vine ;  
The world's a dream for you and me, a dream that  
will not long be mine ;  
But for this hour let us together find on the cliff a  
sheltered place,  
Where I can lie on thyme and heather, and hear you  
speak and watch your face.

If one should come to you and say, “ Bad is my life,  
my fault is such,”—  
Would you then turn your eyes away, refuse to him  
your hand to touch ?

And if he told you of his grief for deeds of his, what should he fear ?

Would you help him with your belief, or say, “Good-bye,” my dear, my dear ?

If one in need sought you, as I, not wanting right nor seeking grace,

But still in love with the blue sky, yet more the lover of your face,

What would your answer be to him, and would you look at the bright sea,

Or where the shadows are so dim they hide your eyes and thoughts from me ?

The perfect days are very few, and rarely happiness as near,

So I’m content to be with you, and watch your face, my dear, my dear.

This dream is all that we shall share, I will not risk my golden hour,

For once in life I will not dare, unless you bid who have the power.

I find no comfort in a church, where priests remit  
men's foolish sin.

Your gift is peace from restless search, peace for  
your sake I would not win.

I'll ask no thing and nothing tell, but watch the  
sunset with you here;

We'll give the sun a friend's farewell, and then,  
Good-night, my dear, my dear.

## MONTE DI ROSAMARINA.

DREAMS have come to me and gone,—  
Amber-coloured, sunlight-lit,  
Rainbow thoughts that rested on  
Star dust of the infinite.

Till the master dream on wings,  
Touched my spirit made me wise,  
Showed me workmen, sages, kings,  
The Crusaders' odyssies.

Then I thought in doing things,  
Shadow things, no wisdom lies,  
Nor in work or wanderings,  
But in watching summer skies.

Dreams will come to me and go,  
(Clouds reflected in the sea)  
And alone of all I know,  
Hold my idle soul in fee.

## THE DREAMER AND THE ARMENIAN FORTUNE-TELLER.

SHE told his fortune by a well, among dark poplars  
near the sea,

With incantation, charm, and spell at dusk she  
practised sorcery.

Into her ear well water spoke, below the swift white  
birds flew by,

Unhappy spirits of poor folk,—the Bosphorus was  
their destiny.

Her face was veiled. She said, “Oh fool, your  
constellation once was high ;

You were a leader born to rule, but now a straw the  
stream drifts by.

For, foolish follower of fire, and soul in vain  
endeavour spent,

You planned your Palace of Desire, and homeless  
left your ragged tent.

And one you worshipped, you brought this, your  
homage, frankincense, and myrrh,  
When she had rather have your kiss than high  
allegiance, worshipper.

A many things you leave behind, who pass in dreams  
from star to star,  
And miss the best beside you, blind. Illusion is  
your tutelar.

Deep down the water tells your life, you'll walk a  
way where slaves have ridden,  
A mendicant you'll serve your wife, and sit forlorn  
when guests are bidden.  
Your covenant with ghosts of Spring is all too late  
when Autumn's there,  
O glorious beggar, sorry king, of the unanswered  
prayer.

Then like an arrow evening shone, on its illumined  
way to night,  
Bright from its quiver, it was gone,—a lightning  
darkness sheathed its light.

The poppies of the Golden Horn glowed red among  
the asphodel ;  
Her voice was mingled with the night and water  
murmuring from the well.

He weighed the parables she said, how much he  
wished, how much achieved ;  
The poplars whispered overhead, and gave him  
counsel, many-leaved  
The afterglow just held the place, the sea grew  
poplar-dark and pale.  
He came to life, said, "Show your face," and when  
she would not, snatched her veil.

The homage she desired he gave ; the young moon  
saw, but she was dim,  
They talked no more of king or slave—she left all  
sorcery for him.  
He gave his homage like a man, yet like a man his  
tribute took.  
She told his fortune in the well, and saw her own—  
but would not look.

## MICHAEL ANGELO'S DAWN.

To H. C. D.

YOUR eyes have penetrated to the naked end,  
Stared through the aching emptiness of space ;  
In the inexorable years, was there no friend  
To bring some thought of gladness to your face ?

Did you find nothing in the hills and forests, fair,  
Nor flower, nor fern, nor cedar trees with shade,  
And beauty but a mirage, mocking your despair,  
Long silence and shadows, your answer when you  
prayed ?

I would that I could read what made you sad and  
wise,  
And robed in silence, why you change continually,  
As changes come where even the great stillness lies,  
To those who watch, familiar with the sea.

I think as every generation passes by,  
There are some souls that keep the cool of dawn,  
Whose eyes on cloudy days reflect the clear blue sky,  
Whose feet at noon still tread a frozen lawn.

The eagerness that once you surely had was spent  
As seed on sand, as toil upon the sea,  
Did God Whose thought was in the dawn He sent,  
Send only that grey light to comfort thee?

Ascetic, splendid dreamer, was this the end of dreams  
Faith lost, and hope that over-shot the mark,  
Lost in the light of fickle mountain streams,  
While tides were marching downward through the  
dark?

## GRACE BEFORE SLEEP.

To M.

OUR Lord was born in a poor place,  
Where caravans of travellers lay,  
But over Him the Virgin's face  
Was like my dream of you to-day.

Was like my dream, when dawn was there,  
And still with dawn the lingering night,  
Unseen, but known in the sweet air,  
Like bells that ring beyond the sight.

Our Lady Mary was not proud  
Among poor folk at Bethlehem,  
But great men waited in the crowd  
For her kind look to fall on them.

The Syrian merchant paused to heed  
The prayers of beggars by the gate ;  
The Roman lord drew in his steed,  
To let men pass of low estate.

Red rubies are not made from rust,  
Yet misers threw their money down,  
To buy an aureole from the dust,  
And weave themselves an evening crown.

And some there were whose gains were made  
In ways that honest men despise,  
Who left their shameful carrion trade,  
Because they saw the Virgin's eyes.

Let saints implore for worlds to be,  
And young knights pray for deeds to do.  
May Mary of her charity  
Grant me to-night one dream of you.

## A SONG OF RIVERS.

To M.

LIGHTS upon the yellow Tiber are too beautiful to tell,  
But the ancient poets praised them, and dead emperors loved them well,  
Dim cathedral lights at evening, flash from all the hills of Rome.  
He's a stately river, Tiber. There's a better stream at home.

Fierce by vineyards and by castles, in a fury flows the Rhine,  
And he sets the blood a pulsing like a draught of gallant wine.

Loud his roar through quiet cities. In a rage he  
seeks the sea,  
And the peasants mourn his plunder. There's a  
finer stream for me.

Still the Douro makes a music that it made for  
Moors in Spain,  
Of the wind in highland valleys, and the wrath of  
winter rain,  
Music fit for knights in armour, when the valiant  
trumpets call,  
But I yearn to hear the murmur of an English  
waterfall.

There's a torrent in Albania, where the faint red  
garnets glow,  
Through the feud of waters, like the ghosts of blood,  
shed long ago.  
Women wail by those sad waters for the sorrows that  
are there,  
And the oak-trees mourn for ever over drooping  
maidenhair.

Oh, the moonlit Seine is silver, and I know not what  
she sings,

But her song is surely haunted by the sweep of white  
swans' wings.

Like a sword she cleaves the night, and carries  
memories to the sea,

Frosted gowns, and nobles courting, and a great  
king's revelry.

There are streams that are not waters. The Italian  
fishers know

How the dolphins thread with silver tracks the wist-  
ful afterglow,

Glades that cut a tangled forest, tides that sever seas  
asleep,—

Oh, it's loved they are by cavaliers and the sailors  
of the deep.

There's a pathway to the sunset, shines across a sea  
I love,

There's the Milky Way of Heaven that the angels  
ford above,

There's a pageant on the wheatfield when the  
    shadows flung aside,  
Morning lights a lane of poppies, in a narrow scarlet  
    tide.

By old sluices, weirs, and channels, and deserted  
    torrent ways,  
By processions and their incense, like a scented  
    summer haze,  
By the lovely lakes of lilies, where the fairy wood-  
    lands are,  
By the light that rends the Heavens at the falling of  
    a star,

By the Bosphorus and Jordan, by all Pagan streams  
    and Frank,  
By the dog-rose and the myrtle, and the wild-flowers  
    on their bank,  
By the Spring-song of the rivers when their life is  
    treasured snow,  
By the waterfalls of all the world, my stream's the  
    best I know.

You shall one day see my river where the pines and willows meet,  
Find a shallow filled with sunlight, let it sparkle round your feet;  
When I watch your face reflected in the stillness of a pool,  
I shall call my river still more dear, O you most beautiful.

## THE BALLAD YVONNE.

TO MAURICE.

AND so good-bye, my dear, she said. Go conquer  
foreign lands ;

My soul shall be in your white sword, my heart is in  
your hands.

My dear and gallant warrior, no tears shall dim my  
eyes ;

Farewells should be in morning light, not under  
rain-blue skies.

And this shall be my comfort, each night that you  
are gone,

To sing the song that you love best, the Ballad of  
Yvonne ;

And if perchance a harpstring breaks, no need of  
news for me,

But oh the bitter silence then, till death shall set me  
free.

He answered her : O dreamt-of girl, I do not yearn  
to fight ;

I long to lie on lilies, here, and watch the herons'  
flight.

I would not conquer one small star, while Earth has  
such a store,

Of moss for weary soldiers, and flowers to make a  
floor.

At ease we'll watch the herons fly, until the day is  
done,

And you shall sing me, on your harp, the Ballad of  
Yvonne ;

But if again I crave for fight, or love another maid,  
That is the way of men-at-arms, who serve a fickle  
trade.

Fat monks have got an easy life, rich men can lie  
a-bed,

But my long sword is my highway, and love turns  
steel to lead.

So I will love you, maid of dreams, until the sun  
goes down,

Then put a helmet on my head,—you take my rose-  
leaf crown.

She said: The Ballad of Yvonne is known in every land;

Who ever helped a beggar, or kissed a poor girl's hand,

Who prays to Mary at the Dawn, who dreams of Galilee,

He hears the song some few can sing, from bird and stream and sea.

So go your way, my guest last night, you miss the sweetest tune;

Men pause in Rome to hear it, and beneath the Syrian moon,

It lies in lovers' greetings, and the clash of sword and spear,—

A music fit for gentlemen, not mercenaries, to hear.

There are Italian Cavaliers, who conquer when they kneel,

Whose spirit is a sword more fine than your Toledo steel.

You are not hawk to heron, nor the mountain eagles' game,

So go your way, paid man-at-arms, the twilit way you came.

AHMED ALI  
ON WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

Ahmed Ali happened to be travelling at the time of the Declaration of the Constitution, which he ostentatiously applauded. His enthusiasm was less five months later, when he returned to find a distinctly altered household.

THERE'S purpose in the marching of a man who  
comes and goes,  
There's meaning and God's vigour in the melting  
of the snows,  
But Women tread a way that leads where only  
Allah knows.

When seaweed binds a storm at sea, when spiders  
break the oak,  
When architects can make a mosque of rainbow,  
night and smoke,  
In those dear distant days a man will rule his women-  
folk.

Earth has no corner-stone for them, they put the  
world on edge ;  
They pave Life's way with prickly things, the cactus  
is their hedge ;  
And what they love to honour most, they love still  
more to pledge.

Once I was Lord of Caravans. I took my ease in  
state,  
A-drinking sherbet by a stream, with pretty girls  
to wait,  
Who brought me grapes of Trebizond, and seeds  
of pomegranate.

My eunuchs kept my palace-door : the peace of my  
Serai  
Was like calm Judas-trees at night, beneath a wind-  
less sky :  
No Pasha in all Turkey had such quiet hours as I.

I find no consolation in my marching caravans ;  
More restful far than my own house are Anatolian  
khans,  
Where every couch has fifty fleas, but all the fleas  
are man's.

My palace is unquiet, for my women seek to find  
A magic box of mastery to teach all men their mind,  
Beyond the wish of God to grant, or husbands who  
are kind.

A voice comes out from this machine of paper, string,  
and wood ;

The vote of damsels that desire the claims our sires  
withstood.

Weak women wailing for a sword to man their  
womanhood.

It is a cursèd new device, no good for Peace or War ;  
No saint has ever craved it nor one astronomer ;  
And though it's sold in Frankish towns, 'tis not in  
this bazaar.

They say this Toy's an amulet for measles and  
divorce,

And it can govern mighty Fate, as reins a frantic  
horse ;

Once more I'll give them sweets, and then God's  
law (that is, man's force).

. . . . .

There's sunset on the Bosphorus, the Conqueror's  
golden stream,  
And all the peace of Paradise in gardens where I  
dream,  
And peace as deep as the deep sea inside my cool  
Harim.

When toys alone make women glad, then songs shall  
mortar bricks.

My Harim is united by the tune of falling sticks.  
God gave to man His strength (to use), to women  
gave He tricks.

There's things that are a pity: some actions are a  
sin,

But Turks were born to soldiering, and soldiers have  
to win;

Before you conquer men, My Friends, first rule your  
women kin!

## SEMANGHELLINA AND THE MAD-BLOODED YOUTH.

To G. A. L.

“HERE is a gallant horse for sale, clean pastern,  
flowing mane;

His dam was of the Arab breed, his sire was bred  
in Spain.

This horse was surely foaled to bear the Sultan’s  
Grand Vizier,

His master is a reverend man” (so cried the  
auctioneer);

“Three hundred pounds is all the price we ask a  
mountaineer.”

Then forward sprang a wild young man; mad  
mountain blood had he:

“I boast an ancient lineage, a goodly guarantee;

Five times a-day I say my prayers; I fast at  
Ramadan:

I have no gold, but much I'll win for you in  
Serbistan,

If you will trust the honour of a hill-bred fighting  
man."

That wise old merchant pondered, as he stroked his  
beard of white;

He loved all subtle bargaining, at dawn, at noon,  
at night.

"If thou wilt swear to give to me all gain you get  
abroad,

A blessing on thy wildness and strength to thy long  
sword;

Then mount the horse in Allah's name, and ride him  
as his Lord."

The mad-blood youth rode out to raid the realm of  
Serbistan;

He halted not for brigands, and he tarried at no  
khan;

There was no torrent of the hills, that wrecks a caravan,  
Nor any wrath of waters that one-half as fiercely ran,  
As the blood that urged the wildness of that wild young man.

The King was on his balcony, about him stood his kin;  
The courtiers all fell silent, as the youth rode to the inn.  
He called a Servian ostler, “Fetch me fodder for my steed,  
Fetch water to refresh him, and the best corn for his feed.”  
“Oh, hasten thou,” a herald cried. “Of thee the King hath need.”

He fed his horse and said his prayers, then hied him to the King:  
He gave him low obeisance, but shrewd, hard bargaining.

“ Nine hundred pounds my horse’s price. My Lord,  
he hath no peer.”

The Elders spoke together long: “ O Lord our  
King, give ear;

We dare not tax the people thus — this stallion’s  
price is dear.”

An ancient greybeard planned a plot (he sought a  
courtier’s place):

“ We’ll trap him with our cunning, and entice him  
with a face;

Now listen, gentle Majesty, praise God for this wise  
plan:

Let girls with roses in their hair attend at the  
maidan,

And love will fight our battle with this wild young  
hill-bred man.”

And so upon the morrow stood the men of high  
estate,

Where lovely girls were brought like doves beyond  
the palace gate.

The youth rode out from arches where the light was  
faint and dim,  
And though he loved no maid of them, their hearts  
went out to him ;  
For horse and man were fine to see—high courage,  
splendid limb.

Dawn rode no lighter on the winds than he upon  
his horse ;  
No sweat was on his stallion's neck when he reined  
in his course.  
The angry Elders cursed aloud that greybeard and  
his creed.  
The ancient rascal answered them, “One girl can  
help indeed :  
You have forgot the King's own child ; she shall  
obtain the steed.

“Semanghellina's beauty is beyond the stars and  
sun ;  
If he but see and speak to her, his valour is  
undone.

The racing steeds are good for those who charge  
upon the foe;

It's mules that carry merchandise, more swift than  
chargers go.

And though your blades be sharp, my Lords, by  
God your wits are slow."

The youth rode from dark portals with the sunshine  
on his face,

Upon a steed that touched the ground as wild deer  
in the chase.

Around the maidan once he went, swift as a wild  
bird flies,

And twice he went, but then he saw Semanghellina's  
eyes.

He reined his steed, and saw nought else beneath  
the noonday's skies.

The Princess came to his salute; she stroked his  
horse's mane

(That ancient greybeard prophesied, "My scheme  
will not be vain").

The youth spoke of his contract ; then, “O Lady,  
come with me ;

There’s nought can overtake my horse from Belgrade  
to the sea,

And leave your father’s house, my soul, to learn  
what love can be.”

She answered him, “O my two eyes ! O splendid  
to behold !

Within the palace of my sire I have a cup of  
gold ;

I have a woven cloak of gold, the pockets in it  
nine,

And many liras each contains that shall be yours  
and mine.

Now listen to my counselling. Make thou no hasty  
sign.”

She said, “The noontide sun is strong and in his  
fiercest mood,

His strength hath come in a good hour to madden  
thy wild blood ;

Now cry aloud for water, and it's I will serve thy need."

The youth swayed in the saddle, and, "I faint upon my steed ;

Oh, bring a cup to quench my thirst, and God reward the deed."

She came to him all dressed in gold across the noonday sand ;

He swung her to the saddle with the gold cup in her hand.

Oh, loud the outcry in Belgrade. No steed that had a lord

Stood idle in the stables then ; each sheath gave up its sword ;

But he had left them all behind before he reached the ford.

Then fell upon that greybeard knave the angry nobles' blows,

While through the summer they rode on to high Albanian snows.

The summer was their comrade, and God's mercy in  
the showers,

They crossed clear streams of water, and they lay on  
banks of flowers ;

Between the two his bare sword gleamed throughout  
the midnight hours.

They rested on a lawn of green, when suddenly he  
cried,

“A curse on empty journeys, and a curse upon this  
ride ;

O Allah, give him trouble, the steed that I bestride.”

The maiden answered, “O my soul ! Whatever else  
betide,

Your sword is safe beside you and your love is by  
your side,

A proper pair to cheer a man and fill a chief with  
pride.”

He answered her, “In Ipek, where the mountain  
clansmen are,

An ancient merchant bargains in the gloom of the  
bazaar ;

He ponders on my coming and forecasts the wealth  
I bring :

I bear a golden tribute and the daughter of a  
King.

I may not tarry longer, dear, to hear the wild bird  
sing."

Semanghellina made reply, "I was not won by  
force ;

With my whole heart I came to you to mount your  
gallant horse.

The woods are full of music, see the lovely glades  
of green.

Forget your idle promises, and what those wild  
words mean :

For you shall lead a warrior band, and I will be your  
Queen."

He said, "My coral rosary has ninety-nine red  
beads,

The names of the All-Merciful, where each a wound  
that bleeds ;

And I could staunch the hurt of them by treachery  
and lie,  
By Allah and His Prophet and the Saints that  
testify,  
I would not be an infidel; a Moslem I would die."

They travelled swiftly through the hills; at night the  
moon was strong.  
They paused no more by rivers, nor to hear the wild  
birds' song.  
At last they came to Ipek town, beneath the evening  
star,  
And found the merchant where he sat outside the  
old bazaar:  
"It's fast we've come," the wild youth said; "it's fast  
we've come and far."

"Now hear the tale I have to tell, O Master of the  
Horse:  
I've robbed a King and country, and I conquered  
fraud by force.

By Allah who is merciful to all of the true creed,  
By Him, the great Disposer, I have been true  
indeed ;  
So if thou judge me faithful, Lord, then grant my  
work its meed.

“ There’s sorrow in the Palace, they mourn in  
Serbistan  
The gains that I have got you and the glory of my  
clan ;  
The King grieves for his daughter and the wrecking  
of a plan,  
A scheme of guile and cunning that an ancient  
wretch began,  
To steal away the wisdom of a young mad-blooded  
man.

“ Here is a cup of gold I bring and plenteous golden  
store,  
And such a gold-embroidered coat was never seen  
before ;

The work is of the Moorish kind, from Jerez or  
Xenil,

The garment bears the name of God. Your horse  
waits for your will,

To ride to Prisrend in the plain or Dibra on the  
hill.

“ And last of all, Effendiler, a maid I bring to you,  
A very flower of loveliness that keeps dawn’s freshest  
dew ;

She has a Christian King to sire, so she is yashmak  
free.

My soul yearns for her beauty as the Greeks desire  
the sea.

Then reckon out our contract now ; God’s grace  
abide with thee.”

That ancient merchant thought awhile, a-fingering  
his beads :

“ I sing the praise of Allah’s name ; may He requite  
thy deeds.

Mad-blooded one, you take no thought like pilgrims  
when they start,

But Allah loves a generous man, He loves a generous  
heart.

Oh, warm my welcome home, my son, to whom I  
bade depart.

“ Mine is the cloak and half its wealth ; I’ll take the  
cup of gold ;

The horse is thine and half the wealth ; the girl is  
yours to hold.

My life has lain in bargaining ; I know the subtle  
phrase

That makes the maidens buy my silk, that wins the  
women’s praise.

God does not care for twining paths ; go on in your  
straight ways.”

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